



**BIG SIOUX RIVER PROJECT | Steering Committee Meeting**  
9:00-11:00am, September 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023

**Minnehaha Community Water Corp. | 47381 248<sup>th</sup> Street | Dell Rapids, SD 57022**

**Location:** Minnehaha Community Water Corp., 47381 248<sup>th</sup> Street, Dell Rapids, SD 57022  
**Time and Date:** 09:00-11:00 Monday, 25 September 2023  
**Attendees:** Barry Berg, Amber Lively, Gordon Heber, Ryan Allen, Darrell DeBoer, Troy Lambert, Tyson Cerkowniak, Emily Oyos, Tanner Clausen, John Parker, Michelle Burke, Jeremy Schelhaus, Jay Gilbertson

1. **Call to order at 9:05am. by Minnehaha Conservation District Project Sponsor - Gordon Heber**
2. **Introductions**
3. **Approve Agenda**
  - Approved without corrections.
  - Motion Darrell DeBoer (Moody County Conservation), Second John Parker (Minnehaha County Conservation)
4. **Approval of June 27<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes.**
  - Approved without corrections.
  - Motion John Parker, Second Darrell DeBoer
5. **NRCS programs update (~~Jeremy Sova~~) - Michelle Burke**
  - FFY23 funding period wraps up 30 September.
  - IRA funding has increased for FFY24.
  - RCPP Deadline October 27, 2023.
  - Looming shut down may occur next Monday October 2, 2023
6. **City of Sioux Falls update - Troy Lambert**
  - Big Sioux River Water & Sustainability Summit date has been set for 7 December.
  - Abstracts are still being requested to assist on the water tract of the summit, but current proposed speakers are as follows:
    - a) Troy Larson - Lewis & Clark/Dakota Mainstem Updates
    - b) Amber Lively - Buffers and Water Quality
    - c) John McMain – Willow Creek
    - d) National Weather Service.
    - e) Pheasants Forever.
    - f) (Pending administrative approval) – Smithfield updates on their water quality improvement project.



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- E. coli filter project is still moving forward with hopes for completion Fall 2023 or Spring 2024

### **7. Big Sioux River Project - Barry Berg**

- 4 SRAM contracts completed in 2023.
- 168 acres, 25,914 linear feet, 4.9 miles.
- 88.8 Miles, 3574.3 acres SRAM & RAM totals through 2022.
- 93.7 Miles, 3,742.3 acres total through 2023.

### **8. August 23<sup>rd</sup> = SRAM Grazing Lands Partnership Field Day**

- 40 Attendees at the event with equal representation from Producers and Partners
- 3 Speakers – Lyle Perman, Jeff Zimprich, and Dr. Sandy Smart
- Surveys were distributed to producers in attendance asking:
  - a) whether they were currently enrolled in a land management program (**RAM = 1; SRAM = 8, CRP/CREP = 3; EQIP = 2**)
  - b) If so, *“at the end of your current land management program contract, are you likely to continue managing pastureland in a similar manner? **10/11 = Yes***
  - c) If not currently enrolled in a land management program, what are the prohibitive factors for enrollment: **Current rate of payment on riparian land = 3/3**
  - d) Would you like the Big Sioux River Project to contact you about your pastureland? **5 = Yes**
- Two producers followed up with Barry following the event and have a combined 130 acres to consider for SRAM in 2024.
- BSRP will sort through feedback regarding questions of reenrollment, alternative water programs, and shade canopy programs.
- Planning on a summer 2024 Field Day in another portion of the watershed

### **9. Big Sioux River Project Information & Education Update - Amber Lively**

- **Education Update**
  - a) Wildlife/Wildflower Wednesday – continued social media campaign through end of August.
  - b) Attended RCPP Training in preparation for 2024 grant renewal.
  - c) 7 Sept: RANG 374: Habitat Management course (60 students)
    1. About 1/3 of the class represented future landowners/operators
    2. 3-hour lab that took place on SRAM site and discussed SRAM, water quality, and habitat services of buffers
- **Outreach**
  - a) 7 Jul: Riverfest planning meeting coordination with Emily of FBSR



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- b) 24 Jul: Family Park Strategic Planning Meeting
  - c) 9 Aug: Sioux Empire Fair. Ag Appreciation Day.
  - d) Set up BSRP tent and had literature on SRAM and some Urban literature from MCD.
  - e) 10 Aug: Sioux Nation Ag Podcast
    - 1. Barry and Amber interviewed for an overview of BSRP.
    - 2. Release of episode pending on major podcast platforms
  - f) Discussed SRAM and I&E efforts of the project (release of podcast episode TBD)
  - g) 19 Aug: Riverfest
    - 1. Hosted booth focused on Urban impacts. Engagement activity: "How do you explore the Big Sioux?" push pin map. ~100 Pins in engagement map
    - 2. Prizes donated from The Great Outdoor Store, Terra Shepherd Boutique, Print with Press, and Scheels. 32 individuals completed the prize request survey.
  - h) 23 Aug: SRAM Grazing Lands Field Day: "This is Our Water"
  - i) 29 Aug: Grasslands Video with Joe Dickie Photography/Windigo Images
    - 1. Barry and Amber Interviewed on SRAM and Water Quality and how they intersect with Urban areas for "Our Amazing Grasslands" feature.
    - 2. Shooting took place on SRAM site and Legacy Park buffer.
  - j) 21 Sept: Presentation to East Dakota Water Development District board (Overview of SRAM event)
  - k) 22 Sept: Met with Dakota Horizons Girl Scouts to discuss developing a Water Quality badge/patch program.
    - 1. Debuting Water Quality Patch in Spring 2024 with intent to encourage outdoor engagement in the watershed.
    - 2. Working to create a contest for Girl Scouts to design the patch.
- **Ongoing Projects**
    - a) Creation of engagement maps & materials for Riverfest and other outreach events
      - 1. Pin map from Riverfest's "How Do You Enjoy the Big Sioux?" will be used at the City's Big Sioux River & Sustainability Summit to collect additional data.
      - 2. Storm Drain Input and Urban Actions materials will be reused at future events.
    - b) Website Updates – New Pages
      - 1. Water Quality Information
      - 2. BSRP History
    - c) Development of educational handouts
      - 1. Habitat Services Booklet – working to create a generic booklet that features benefits of habitat services provided by buffers. Will be utilized at Pheasant Fest in March 2024 (booth shared with DANR)
      - 2. "About BSRP" trifold – first draft printed and under review.
    - d) Buffer Comparison – working with Tanner to create comparison chart of SRAM, RAM, CREP, and RBI



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- e) Big Sioux River & Sustainability Summit (7 December): Abstract submitted.
1. Proposed title: Deciphering Water Quality Changes from Best Management Practices

**10. RBI Project update (Tanner Clausen).**

- <https://danr.sd.gov/Conservation/WatershedProtection/RiparianBuffer.aspx>
- RBI can be stacked on to CRP, SRAM, RAM, and other programs for buffer initiatives and animal waste management systems within priority areas established in ASRD 74:51:53:07 or 74:51:02:04
- Buffers
  - a) 2 signed buffer contracts
  - b) 2 buffer projects pending
- AWMS – 1 signed contract (Coddington County)
- Current limitations require implementation be “within 1 mile” of an impaired stream. This qualification is being revisited by DANR to allow for judgement-based decisions on adjacent properties.

~~11. City of Brandon (Tami Jansma).~~

**12. Other Business.**

- Ryan Allen (Minnehaha Community Water Corp.) brought up a need for engineering assistance (Rip Rap) near well field to protect well field from being eroded into.
- Jay Gilbertson (East Dakota Water Development District - EDWDD) mentioned that EDWDD has begun discussions with SDSU Extension to explore formal assessments of buffer programs and the economics of riparian grass production in Eastern South Dakota.

**13. Adjourn – Gordon Heber @ 10:15am.**